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FOR G/IWI AND EUR/SE

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TAGS: [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [CY](#)

SUBJECT: CYPRUS - INTERNATIONAL WOMEN OF COURAGE NOMINATION

REF: STATE 12871

¶1. Per reftel action request, Embassy Nicosia nominates anti-TIP activist Ms. Mine Yucel for the Secretary's Award for International Women of Courage. For further information regarding this nominee, please contact Embassy's Bicomunal Program Coordinator Juliette Dickstein, dicksteinja@state.gov, at (357) 22-393909, or Poloff Terry Steers-Gonzalez, steers-gonzalez@state.gov, at (357) 22-393364.

¶2. NAME: Mine Yucel  
TITLE: Director  
INSTITUTION: Prologue Consulting, LTD  
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¶3. Post nominates Mine Yucel for this Award because she has demonstrated exceptional courage and leadership in promoting awareness of the problem of trafficking of women in the Turkish Cypriot community. Her report, "Women Trafficking in the Turkish Cypriot Community," which was completed in December 2006 with partial support from Embassy Nicosia's Bicomunal Support Program, has encouraged members of civil society organizations, academics, and policy makers to engage in serious dialogue about how the trafficking of women for the purpose of exploitation in the commercial sex industry constitutes a grave abuse of human rights that cannot be tolerated.

¶4. Yucel has devoted enormous amounts of professional and personal time not only to mapping the extent of the problem in northern Cyprus, but also to raising awareness among the Turkish Cypriot community of the need for policy change: prevention of trafficking activities, protection of victims, and prosecution of traffickers. Yucel's study exposed her to direct personal danger when she repeatedly ventured into seedy nightclubs run by criminal figures in order to interview trafficked women, nightclub managers, and clients seeking the services of the women.

¶5. Her work has generated unprecedented publicity and policy debate within the Turkish Cypriot community. Over 50 articles on Yucel's work appeared in the Turkish Cypriot press in December 2006 after the release of her report. Yucel also discussed her work on Turkish Cypriot television stations Genc TV and Kibris TV, as well as on Kibris radio.

¶6. Her research and advocacy in the Turkish Cypriot community have affected Greek Cypriot civil society as well. In no small part due to her efforts, the issue of trafficking of women is being discussed for the first time by the media in both communities as well as by ordinary citizens. Her shocking report has helped Cypriots frame the question of trafficking as a serious human rights problem -- single-handedly undermining the public belief that TIP and forced

prostitution were titillating subjects not fit for discussion in polite society. She has created a dynamic policy debate, which the Embassy is trying to maintain. NGOs from both sides of the "Green Line" are now actively engaged in preparing for island-wide activities that include a comprehensive public awareness campaign, civil society capacity-building training programs, and a policy document outlining recommendations for Cyprus, based on best practices found among different anti-TIP national action plans.

SCHLICHER